

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-12 remain pending in the application. Claim 6 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof. Claims 10 and 12 have been amended to properly depend from claim 1 in view of the cancellation of claim 6.

Reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the pending application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lewis, U.S. Patent No. 6,070,723 in view of Sharpe, U.S. Patent No. 5,570,856. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to more clearly distinguish over the applied prior art references by further reciting that the portion of the upper lip extending around the lower section of the upper case is provided with a second clamping projection configured to be fitted into a second clamping groove provided on the portion of the upper lip extending around the upper section of the upper case. No new matter is introduced by the present amendment. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is directed to, inter alia, canceled claim 6 of Applicant's application.

Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references relied upon in the rejection under 35U.S.C. 103(a) do not disclose such a combination of features.

The Lewis reference at least lacks the clamping groove and the clamping projection as the Examiner indicated.

The Sharpe reference at least lacks the second clamping projection and the second clamping groove although the Sharpe includes the projection 102b the groove 38b. The Examiner asserts, in the rejection of claims 4 and 6, that Sharpe discloses second clamping projection 102b and second clamping groove 38b. In this regard, however, Applicant respectfully submits that, in Sharpe, the protrusions 102a, 102b on forward lid portion 96 engage the cavities 104a, 104b of flange 26 of housing 12 (column 6, lines 49-53), and are not configured to be fitted into the grooves 38a, 38b.

However, in the presently claimed embodiment, the portion of the upper lip 103 extending around the lower section of the upper case 100 is provided with a second clamping projection 108 configured to be fitted into a second clamping groove 107 provided on the portion of the upper lip 103 extending around the upper section of the upper case 100.

Thus, even assuming, arguendo, that the teachings of Lewis and Sharpe can be properly combined, the asserted combination of Lewis and Sharpe would not result in the invention as recited in amended claim 1.

Thus, the rejection of independent claim 1, and of claims 2-5 and 7-12 dependent thereon, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is improper for at least these reasons, and withdrawal of such rejection is respectfully requested.

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

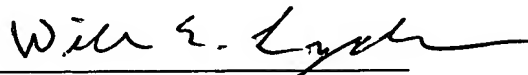
Applicants note that although the present amendment is being submitted subsequent to Final rejection and that entry is not a matter of right, nevertheless, since

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claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of former dependent claim 6, the amendment does not raise any new issues, but is believed to place the application in condition for allowance, and at least simplifies issues for appeal. Thus, entry is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
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